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## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN WALTON COUNTY CELEBRATES NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

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**DeFuniak Springs, Fla.** — This week, April 1 – 7, the Florida Department of Health in Walton County is acknowledging National Public Health Week (NPHW). NPHW presents an opportunity for communities across the United States to reflect on the contributions of public health and highlight issues that are important to improving our health.

Public health professionals across Walton County make it their life's work to help keep people and communities healthy- from better maternal and child health to improvements in disease control and prevention to addressing environmental concerns and emergency preparedness.

"Public health recognizes that there are many factors that impact the health of a community. These include housing, employment, and education.", said Holly Holt RN, BSN, MSM, Health Officer, Florida Department of Health in Walton County. "Public health seeks to prevent problems from happening or recurring through health education and promotion, policy, and services through a health equity lens."

"We are fortunate to have a robust local public health system that works daily to meet the needs of our community," stated Kay Brady, Director of the Walton Okaloosa Council on Aging. "An excellent example of this is the Age-Friendly Walton initiative, which focuses on removing barriers older adults might encounter to live a healthy, happy and fulfilled life."

In Walton County, the [Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#) is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the CHIP and collaborates regularly to track progress.

“Collaborating with DOH-Walton and WCHIP on prevention efforts is truly the core of public health, stated Bryan Callahan, Walton County Prevention Coalition Coordinator. “Public health is all of us working together to make our communities healthier by preventing problems from happening through implementing educational programs, recommending policies, administering services and conducting research.”

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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